Government, it clearly shows the commitment of the Government towards the welfare of the tribes. I would like to know from the hon. Minister whether it is a fact that the Ministry has not so far published the population figures of the Primitive Tribal Groups as per 2001 Census. If yes, what are the reasons for not publishing the figures of the tribes as per the 2001 Census? Without publishing these figures, how is the Ministry planning to carry out its programmes.

SHRI P.R. KYNDIAH: So far as the number of tribal groups is concerned, the Primitive Tribal Group is 75 in number and in the census population; we have for 1961, 1981, 1991. And 2001 is yet to come to us. So, it is very clear that the population about which we had the apprehension in certain communities will decline, has come up. This is one of the thrust areas. There are certain primitive tribals which are declining in population, that is what has happened now.

Publishing of telephone directories

*311. SHRIMATI JAYA BACHCHAN: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) the number and names of cities other than metros for which MTNL brings out telephone directories;

(b) when were the last directories brought out in respect of these cities;

(c) whether it is a fact that for the last several years, no telephone directories have been brought out in respect of these cities, if so, the reasons therefor; and

(d) by when the next issue of telephone directories is likely to be brought out?

THE MINISTER OF COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (SHRI DAYANIDHI MARAN): (a) to (d) A Statement is laid on the Table of the House.

Statement

(a) Sir, Mahanagar Telephone Nigam Limited (MTNL) brings out Telephone Directories for Delhi and Mumbai, where it is functioning. The telephone directory of MTNL, Mumbai also covers Navi Mumbai, Thane, Greater Mumbai, Mira-Bhayandar and Panvel Municipal areas.

(b) to (d) Do not arise in view of (a) above.

SHRIMATI JAYA BACHCHAN: Sir, I got the answer. सर, जवाब मिल गया है। I am satisfied.

*312. [The questioner (Shri Lalit Suri) was absent. For answer *vide* page 47]

Funds for private telecom operators for rural telephony

*313. SHRI C. PERUMAL: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have planned to provide funds to private operators to create telecom infrastructure in rural areas;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether any target has been fixed for those operators to provide telephone facilities in rural areas;

(d) if so, the details thereof; and

(e) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (SHRI DAYANIDHI MARAN): (a) to (e) A Statement is laid on the Table of the House.

Statement

(a) to (e) A proposal is under active consideration of the Government to provide support for shareable infrastructure to the eligible access service providers and infrastructure service providers for providing cellular mobile services in rural and remote areas of the country. Consultations have been held with the Access Service Providers, Infrastructure Providers, Association of Telecom Service Providers and Manufacturers in this regard. To enable such support, a bill to amend the Indian Telegraph Act, 1885 is proposed to be introduced during the Budget Session 2006.

SHRI C. PERUMAL: Sir, first of all, the answer is not complete. I would like to know whether any target has been fixed for BSNL and other